Hearst, Sir William Howard [Prime Minister of Ontario] Nov. 1916 - May 1917

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Letter from Hon. W. R. Hearst.

(Private & Confidential)

Letters from Hon W. H. Hearst.

Personal.

OFFICE OF
THE PRIME MINISTER & PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL
ONTARIO

Private and
Confidential.

Toronto, Nov. 2nd, 1916.

My dear Dr. Falconer,

The action of Professor Mavor in becoming, what is understood to be, the paid advocate of private corporations in attacking the Government for its support of public ownership and generally attacking the principle of public ownership, is causing no small amount of indignation not only among supporters of the Government but supporters of public ownership. This has the result of bringing condemnation upon the University as a whole, and will make the pathway of the Government more difficult even than in the past in its support of this Institution.

I always feel delicate in criticizing another man's conduct, but the taste displayed by Professor Mavor in attacking for fee and reward the Government that so largely supports the University in which he is a Professor, certainly seems open to question. If the reward held out by corporation influences and those opposed to the present Government is greater than that paid him by the University, then I think he should at once sever his connection with the University and devote himself entirely to his other masters. I, of course, have no knowledge that Professor Mavor is paid for his work,

but that is the most charitable view I could place upon his actions. Many of his statements are so inaccurate and unfair that I could not believe he would desire out of pure malice to mislead the public, as his articles in some cases seem intended to do, unless his judgment and sense of fair play were blinded by money rewards obtained for his labors.

There is another aspect I would ask you to consider: whether it is wise to have in the very important position Professor Mavor occupies, a man who is as reckless in his statements and as illogical in his arguments as this gentleman shows by his writings in the "Financial Post." Professor Mavor not satisfied with his attack upon the Hydro Electric System seems anxious to injure the Government whenever he can and to attack everything in the nature of progressive legislation for the benefit and comfort of the people. To quote one example in his article in the "Post" of September 23rd he states in criticism of the Workmen's Compensation Act as follows:

> "Nearer home there is a conspicuous case in the Workmen's Compensation for Accident Commission, under which an excessive number of employees permit the exercise of political patronage and cause a considerable loss to tax-paying employers."

This criticism is not only unfair but absolutely untruthful. The appointments to the Staff of this Commission are made by the Board without interference of any kind and without the exercise of political patronage, and I do not believe the number of employees is excessive. I scarcely know the politics of a

single employee under that Board. I am informed that Liberals are employed upon it, and that the Chairman does not let political influence sway him one iota in appointments to the Staff. The Chairman is looked upon as a very exacting employer by those on the Staff, and I know he has not hesitated in letting men go who he felt were not fully qualified for the positions to which they had been appointed.

I would not for a moment bother you with this matter if it were simply a question affecting the Government. I am quite prepared to defend at the proper time and place the actions of my Government in connection with public ownership or anything else, but the conduct of this Professor is liable to and is bringing criticism upon the University and uneasiness to the minds of many well wishers of this Institution, and to my mind calls for attention by the proper authorities.

I would be glad to discuss the situation with you at some convenient time, and I want to assure you that I have been prompted to write this letter in the interests of the University not from fear of Professor Mavor's criticism of the Government. The more criticism we get of this kind the more popular we will be.

I am,

Yours very sincerely,

Dr. R. A. Falconer,
President, University of Toronto,
TORONTO.

November 7th, 1916

Hon. W. H. Hearst, LL.D.,

Prime Minister of Ontario.

My dear Mr. Hearst:

I have already had one interview with Professor Wavor and I am expecting to have another very soon. After I have had my second talk with him I will ask you to give me an interview with regard to the matter.

Yours sincerely,

President.

OFFICE OF
THE PRIME MINISTER & PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL
ONTARIO

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL. TORONTO, November 25th, 1916.

My dear President Falconer,-

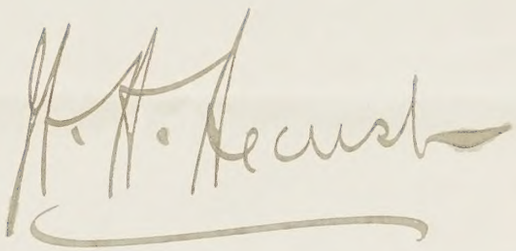
Press of public duties has prevented me giving attention to the matter we discussed when I last saw you until now. On reflection I do not think it would be wise or proper for me to write Professor Mavor direct. His communication was directed to you and if I make it the basis for communication with him, I think possibly it might invoke a further reply from him and tend to embarrass the situation, and I therefore think any communication I make should be direct to you.

Before writing you, however, I am sending you a rough draft of my proposed letter and if you desire to discuss any statements made in this letter before I finally settle and mail it, I would be glad to see you any time, if you would be good enough to phone me.

I would let the matter drop without any further comment, but for the fact that in his letter to you Professor Mavor puts me in an absolutely false light and for some reason best known to himself attributes words to me

that I did not use and sentiments that I do not entertain.

Yours very sincerely,



President Falconer,
University of Toronto,
Toronto, Ont.

Encl.

9 February, 1917.

The Honourable W. H. Hearst,

Prime Minister of Ontario,

Toronto.

Dear Mr. Hearst:

I am directed by the Board of Governors to inform you that at their meeting yesterday the case of Mrs. Loudon, widow of the late Dr. James Loudon, sometime President of the University, was considered and it was resolved to grant Mrs. Loudon a pension at the rate of $2,500 per annum for the remainder of her life. In arriving at this decision the Board were influenced by certain considerations which they think render this case exceptional and should not cause it to be regarded as establishing a precedent.

At the time Dr. Loudon retired from the staff of the University in 1906 it was felt that in view of his long service to the Institution, dating from 1863, he should receive a pension of $5,500 per annum, which was the full amount of his salary, and with the knowledge and approval of the Government of that day this was granted to him.

The Carnegie Foundation system of retiring allowances had not then been established. When the University was accepted two or three years later as an Institution to be placed upon this Foundation efforts were made to induce the Foundation to take over the charge of the retiring allowance of the Ex-President. This they declined to do.

Had the Board been successful in procuring the Founda-

tion's consent to take over this charge, or part of it, Mrs. London would have been entitled upon the death of her husband to one-half the amount he had been receiving. The circumstances in which she is left, as communicated to the Board, taken into account with the foregoing facts, seemed to demand that some allowance should be made by the University, and the conclusion above stated was arrived at.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

Bursar.

OFFICE OF
THE PRIME MINISTER & PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL
ONTARIO

Toronto, November 30th, 1916.

My dear President Falconer,

In further reference to Professor Mavor's letter to you, dated 8th instant, which you were good enough to show me the other day, I beg to say that while I have no desire to enter into correspondence or discussion upon the subject matter of the letter referred to, I feel it incumbent upon me to correct some misapprehensions Professor Mavor evidently entertained when he wrote this letter with reference to my attitude.

Professor says, among other things,-

> "I understood that Mr. Hearst had indicated that these criticisms had been in some way inconvenient to the Government and that Mr. Hearst had requested you to put a stop to them. I understood from you also that Mr. Hearst hinted broadly that if they were not stopped the Government might be unwilling to implement its promise with regard to meeting the deficit in the University finances for the current year."

I never, directly or indirectly, by hint, insinuation or otherwise, intended to convey to you any such impression as outlined in the Professor's letter, and if you so understood me, I failed utterly to convey to you the impression I intended, and you entirely misconceived my attitude of mind.

Professor Mavor in his letter

further states,-

> "The objection of Mr. Hearst to my criticism and his expressed or implied threat to make the University suffer pecuniarily on account of them illustrates that portion of my argument, etc.,"

As you well know, I never made any threat, direct or implied, and any such thought was furthest from my mind. So far as my complaining of his articles from a political standpoint is concerned, I pointed out specifically that the more articles of the character of those in question were produced the stronger and more popular my Government would be. From a political standpoint I welcome all such attacks.

I did, however, point out the unwisdom, in my view, from the standpoint of the University, in which I am interested both as a public man and as a citizen of the Province, of a Professor on the Staff of the Provincial University largely aided by public funds, carrying on a newspaper campaign of the kind in which Professor Mavor has been engaged. The articles in question have been and are being used by those opposed to the University and its present management to stir up a feeling against the University, to create distrust as to the ability and judgment of its Staff, and generally to arouse antagonism to the Institution as now constituted. Surely any action that would have the effect I have mentioned should receive the serious consideration of all friends of the University. I naturally expected that Professor Mavor himself would be interested and would desire the welfare of the University of which he was a Professor. It was in that spirit and with that ob-

ject I spoke to you. My remarks and my motives have, however, been completely misinterpreted.

The articles referred to are particularly harmful and dangerous in the direction I have mentioned. Men and women who have not received the benefit of a higher education themselves, and have not had the advantages of such an education brought home to them and their families, are not as a rule inclined to look too sympathetically upon Universities and Colleges, and the expenditure of large sums of money upon them. Their attitude in many cases, at all events, is that State aid should be confined to Public and High Schools, and that those requiring University advantages should pay for them themselves. Do not misunderstand me. I am not presenting my view in this connection, but simply stating a view entertained in certain quarters.

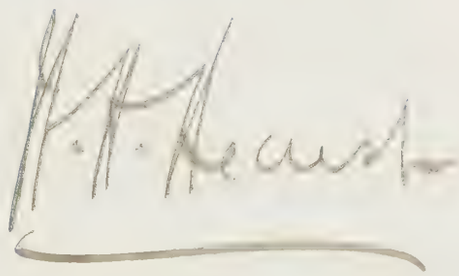
The class referred to has been especially benefitted by the legislation attacked by Professor Mavor. The mechanic and the labourer to-day are enabled to have their homes lighted at one-half or one-quarter what it cost them when private Corporations had the monopoly of this service and were reaping large dividends for their shareholders from the utilization of the natural resources of the Province. Other advantages have also flowed in large measure from the Hydro-Electric policy of the Government. Large sums of money that formerly went into the pockets of lawyers, accident insurance companies, claims agents, and others, are now by means of the Workmens' Compensation Act finding their way into the pockets of widows of men killed in ourfactories, and into the pockets

of men who have been maimed or injured in their work, to the great relief, comfort and happiness of the people referred to.

Professor Mavor bitterly attacks the measures that in the way I have indicated, and otherwise, have brought comfort and relief to thousands of our citizens of the class I have referred to. He is naturally looked upon by them as the mouthpiece of the corporations, and his connection with the Staff of the University causes a feeling, in some quarters at all events, that the University is the friend and ally of the rich and the corporations, as against the labouring man, and all efforts to aid and help him.

In view, however, of the complete misinterpretation placed upon my words and motives, I can see nothing to be gained by pursuing the subject further, and it is now closed so far as I am concerned.

Yours very sincerely,



Dr. R. A. Falconer,
President, University of Toronto,
T O R O N T O :

February 1st, 1917

The Honourable Sir William Hearst, K.C.M.G.,

Premier of Ontario.

Dear Mr. Premier:

I am forwarding to you herewith copies of the memorandum, one being the reply of our Board of Governors and Senate to the memorandum of the Senate of Queen's University regarding the six years' course [illegible] University of Toronto [illegible].

[illegible] you think should be distributed and to any addressee that you may name.

Yours sincerely,

President.

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March 15th, 1917

Sir William Hearst, K.C.M.G.,

Premier of Ontario.

My dear Sir William:

You were kind enough when I saw you last Saturday to consent to take care of the lectures in the proposed course that we are to have at the University on "Canadian Literature". [illegible] I enclose to you and "Sir Augustus, or Riverside Gentleman". Can we [illegible] I do, I shall ask Dr. Parkin to [illegible]

Yours sincerely,

President.

OFFICE OF
THE PRIME MINISTER & PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL
ONTARIO

TORONTO, March 17th, 1917.

My dear Dr. Falconer,-

Thursday May 10th would suit me much better than May 3rd. In fact, I am afraid I might not be able to be with you on the earlier date. It probably would make no difference to Mr. Rowell which date he took. If so, the change would greatly oblige me.

Yours truly,

Dr. Falconer,
University of Toronto,
TORONTO, Ont.

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March 19th, 1917

Sir William Hearst, K.C.M.G.,

Premier of Ontario.

Dear Sir William:

I shall be glad to put your down for Thursday, May 10th. Your convenience, of course, is to be considered first in any case, and I suppose it will not make any difference to Mr. Fowler what date he takes. I hope to let you know before long as to the final arrangements of the programme.

With many thanks, I am,

Yours sincerely,

President.

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March 28th, 1917

Dear Sir William:

I have much pleasure in enclosing you a card of the new series of lectures. I hope that the course appeals to you as being suitable for the present time. Certainly the fact that you are to give us one of the lectures adds greatly to its value.

With kind regards, I am,

Yours sincerely,

President.

Sir William Hearst, K.C.M.G.,

Premier of Ontario.

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OFFICE OF
THE PRIME MINISTER & PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL
ONTARIO

Toronto, March 29th, 1917

Dear Sir,-

I am instructed by the Prime Minister to acknowledge receipt of your letter to him of March 28th with card enclosed re series of lectures.

Yours very truly,

Horace Veale

Secretary

Dr. R. A. Falconer,
President of the University,
Toronto, Ont.

May 7th, 1917

My dear Sir William,

We are looking forward with much pleasure to your lecture in the Convocation Hall on Thursday evening of this week, May 10th. Though the lecture is announced for eight o'clock, we do not begin till a quarter past eight. Perhaps if you were there at about ten minutes past eight that would meet the situation.

With kind regards, I am,

Yours sincerely,

President.

Sir William Hearst, K.C.M.G.,

Premier of Ontario.